



DECEMBER NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

Christmas Closure

What a terrific year we've had at the library, with a packed calendar of events and an ever-expanding collection. Thank you to our members for your continued support, and we wish you a safe and enjoyable festive season.

The library will close at 4pm on Wednesday 20th December and will reopen on Tuesday 9th January. During the closure, eBooks can still be borrowed. If you need help downloading eBooks please speak to the library staff.



Music and Books: Chain Book Launch

There are still some tickets available for the December 15 launch of Peter Beilharz's *Chain's Toward the Blues*. The book is about iconic band Chain, which recorded the classic LP *Towards the Blues*. Fifty years later, this LP remains a monument in Australian rock history.

The book is based on memoirs, research and interviews with guitarist and singer Phil Manning, who will perform at the launch.

Peter Beilharz is Professor of Critical Theory at Sichuan University, China, and has previously held chairs at La Trobe, Harvard and Leeds universities. He has published 30 books, and played as support to Chain in 1971.

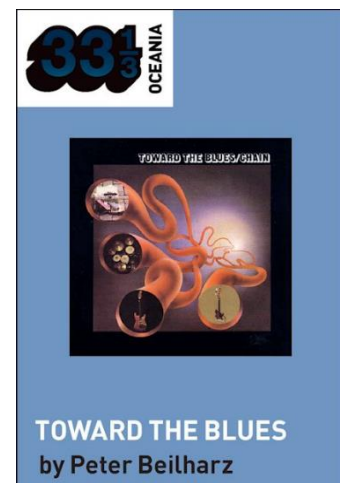
Details

Friday 15 December

Doors open 5.30pm, event from 6pm

Free for members, \$12 non-members

[Book here](#)





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Scarlet Stiletto Winners Announced

The 30th annual Scarlet Stiletto Awards were awash with a sea of scarlet and pearls, as the winners were announced by Fiona Egger and Deb Cox, creators of *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries* and much more.

The Melbourne Athenæum Body in the Library Award (\$1250) went to Alison Pascoe from Banora Point, NSW (pictured above right with Melbourne Athenæum Committee member Barbara Gliddon). Pascoe won for *The Murder in the Library*, about the murder of a crime writer extraordinaire who is unable to move on to the next world until she finds out who committed her murder.



Pascoe, while known as a romance author, has only recently delved into the world of short-story writing and this was her first entry.

The Melbourne Athenæum Body in the Library Runner-Up Award (\$750) was won by Kim Graham from Croydon, Victoria (pictured below with Melbourne Athenæum Committee member Barbara Gliddon). Graham's story, *Borrowed time*, is about three sisters who set out to solve the murder in the local library ... and their small town will never be the same again.



Canberra author Romany Rzechowicz won overall first prize for *Skin and Bone*, a creepy short story about two female artists with strange specialities.

Speaking about her win, she said: "Sometimes writing can feel like shouting into the void, and this has given me a sense of validation that people do enjoy reading what I write, and the accompanying realisation that I can call myself a *real* author now."

This year's awards, run by the Sisters in Crime, attracted 250 short stories, which competed for almost \$13,000 in prize money and benefits.

The winner and runner-up stories in the Body in the Library category will be made available on our website in the coming weeks.



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Victorian Guitar Orchestra Concert

The Victorian Guitar Orchestra will celebrate its end of year concert at the library – and members are welcome to attend.

The orchestra strives to showcase the guitar in a unique way, through a blend of contemporary works, new arrangements of time-honoured favourites and modern Australian compositions.

The program will feature works by Praetorius, Telemann, Satie and Paradiso, as well as guitar solos, a trio, and the full orchestra playing a mix of baroque, classical and contemporary compositions.



Details

Sunday 10 December

2.30-4pm

Tickets \$20, concession \$15

[Book here](#)

Gift Memberships

A membership to the Melbourne Athenaeum Library is a perfect gift idea for a literary buff, or for anyone who enjoys attending regular events. As a special deal for Christmas, we are offering a \$10 discount on gift memberships (\$89 full membership and \$79 concession). If you would like to buy a gift membership, please speak to the library staff.



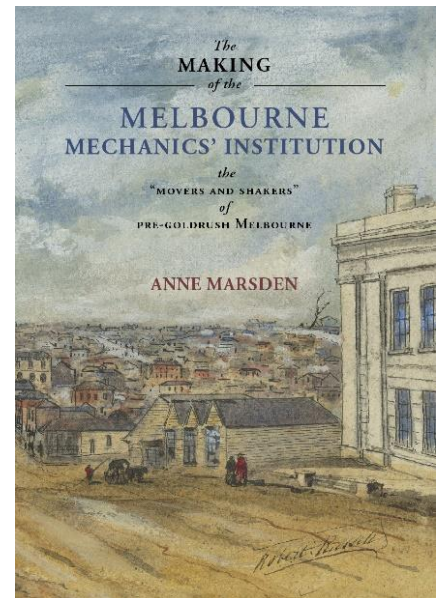


DECEMBER NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

Christmas Book Sale

Get your Christmas shopping sorted at the Ath this year. We have an end-of-year special on three books that tell the fascinating stories of the history of the Athenæum. Buy one book for \$10, two for \$15 or three for just \$20.

The making of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution: the "movers and shakers" of pre-goldrush Melbourne, by Anne Marsden, recounts the story of the establishment of the then-Melbourne Mechanics' Institution, a mere four years after John Batman, John Pascoe Fawkner and a handful of adventurers pitched their tents on the Yarra River's banks. This book explains the origins of mechanics institutes and takes a close look at the 50 men elected to the institute's first committee and their pioneering role that shaped Melbourne's cultural identity.



And the women came too: the families of the founders of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution, by Anne Marsden, explores the intriguing lives of the women who accompanied the men who founded what eventually became the Melbourne Athenæum. Under the most challenging conditions these amazing women provided the stability of family and community networks, enabling the men to focus on their pioneering efforts. The women's stories shed fresh light on the fledgling settlement.

Cultured colonists: George Alexander Gilbert and his family, settlers in Port Phillip, by Margaret Bowman, investigates the life of the first secretary-librarian of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution. As a teacher, creative artist and founder of the city's first art school, George Alexander Gilbert did much to advance the visual arts. He organised the first art exhibition at the now-Athenæum, had stints at publishing and real estate, was an assistant gold commissioner in Bendigo, was secretary of the medical board and lectured in mesmerism (a kind of hypnotism).

Speak to the library staff if you would like to purchase any or all of these fascinating books.



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2024 Events and Residencies

Our 2024 artist and playwright residencies have been locked in – artist Alissa Duke (pictured top) and playwright and screenwriter Ash Flanders (pictured below).

They will join a packed calendar of events next year, including a members' night on Friday 9th February and the return of some popular performers – the Affinity Quartet, Ultrafox and the Partridge String Quartet. Keep an eye on our monthly eNews for details and booking information for all of the events at the library.

Alissa Duke is a law librarian who loves books: to read, to draw and, sometimes, to draw in. She sketches daily, documenting everyday events, objects and travels. Alissa carries her sketchbook, watercolour pencils and pen with her everywhere, saying there is always something to draw. Alissa will be sketching events and library features for the next 12 months, leading up to our 185th birthday next November.



Ash Flanders is a multi award-winning playwright and screenwriter.

In 2006 he and Declan Greene formed a theatre company, *Sisters Grimm*, and together they have written a dozen shows including *The Sovereign Wife* (Melbourne Theatre Company) and *Little Mercy* (Sydney Theatre Company). Ash has also created numerous solo shows.

In 2014, a portrait of Ash by Wendy Sharp was included in The Archibald Prize.

Dates for Ash's residency will be announced next year.

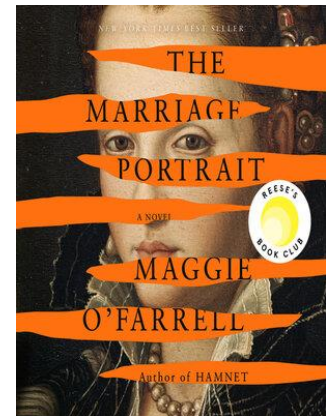


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Book and Screen Clubs

If you are looking for ideas for holiday season reads, our 2023 book clubs' offerings might be a start. Some of the books discussed this year include *The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O'Farrell, *Chai Time at Cinnamon Gardens* by Shankari Chandran, *The Bullet That Missed* by Richard Osman, *Daughter of Time* by Josephine Tey, *White Jazz* by James Ellroy and *Under the Net* by Iris Murdoch.

Thank you to all of our book and screen club members for a great year. If you would like to be part of one of our clubs speak to the library staff.



Booked Out: Zoe Knighton

Unsurprisingly, the December 1 performance by cellist Zoe Knighton is booked out. But if you would like to be added to the waitlist for this event please contact the library on 9650 3100 or library@melbourneathenaeum.org.au

Zoe, a founding member of the Flinders Quartet, will play Bach's Suites 1, 2 and 3 on her Benjamin Banks cello, which was made in 1780.

Image credit: Pia Johnson





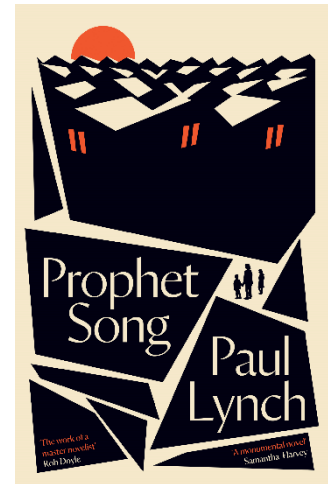
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Booker Prize Winner Announced

The prestigious Booker Prize 2023 has been announced, with Irish author Paul Lynch winning for *Prophet Song*, which can be found on the library's shelves.

Prophet Song is a fearless portrait of a society on the brink and a mother's battle to save her family. It captures some of the biggest social and political anxieties of our age, from the rise of political extremism to the global plight of refugees.

Booker Prize Chair of Judges Esi Edugyan described it as “soul-shattering and true”, adding that readers “will not soon forget its warnings”.



Member Suggestions

Our member suggestion box is always available to members if you have an idea to improve your library.

And Aubrey who puts together our social media posts, is keen to get suggestions from members. If there's a story or book you'd like to share, let us know!

Contact us at library@melbourneathenaeum.org.au
